

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 201

By Favors

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate John P. Franklin, Sr., upon being named one of Chattanooga's esteemed "Pioneer Leaders" by the Kappa Foundation of Chattanooga.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those citizens who, through their extraordinary efforts, have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy individual is John P. Franklin, Sr., who was recently named one of Chattanooga's esteemed "Pioneer Leaders" by the Kappa Foundation of Chattanooga; and

WHEREAS, an "Achievement Scholarship Dinner and Tribute" will be held on May 7, 2011, in his honor and in support of the John P. Franklin, Sr., Scholarship Fund; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Franklin is an exemplary public servant and licensed funeral director, who has provided direction, sympathy, and comfort to grieving families all of his life; and

WHEREAS, the youngest son born to Rosalie Franklin, a teacher, and G.W. Franklin, the first black funeral home operator in Chattanooga, John Franklin, Sr., spent his formative years learning how to operate his family's funeral home business and extending compassionate concern to all who passed through its doors; and

WHEREAS, possessing an unquenchable thirst for knowledge, Mr. Franklin earned a bachelor's degree from Fisk University, a master's degree from Indiana University, and certification in Educational Administration and Supervision from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, John Franklin was joined in holy matrimony with Eva Mann Franklin, and the blessed union produced two children: John, Jr., a licensed funeral director and embalmer,

and Cheryl, the assistant to the Director of the West Side Development Project in Chattanooga;
and

WHEREAS, the loving couple enjoyed many years of marital bliss together before Mrs. Franklin went onto receive her great reward; and

WHEREAS, in 1952, John Franklin listened to his entrepreneurial spirit and formed the partnership of Franklin-Strickland Funeral Home and later founded the John P. Franklin Funeral Home in 2007. Both establishments have stood as paragons of professionalism and as testaments to the time-honored values of family, tradition, and service; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being a conscientious businessman, Mr. Franklin is also an extremely talented and compassionate educator who worked assiduously to motivate his students to reach their full potential as the principal of William J. Davenport Elementary School; and

WHEREAS, because of his exemplary service there, John Franklin was appointed the first principal of the newly constructed Alton Park Junior High School, which was later re-named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, an innovative and inspiring leader in education, Mr. Franklin was the first African-American to be elected President of the Tennessee School Board Association and rendered sterling service as Chairman of the Chattanooga Board of Education for twenty years; and

WHEREAS, having earned the respect and admiration of his entire community, John Franklin was urged to run for the Chattanooga City Commission and became the first African-American elected at-large to that noble institution, serving in the notable position of Commissioner of Education and Health, as well as Vice Mayor of the City of Chattanooga; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Franklin is also a dedicated civic leader who has distinguished himself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order through his work with numerous organizations. He is a 32nd Degree Mason, a member of the Shriners, Elks, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, National League of Cities' Board of Directors and Advisory Board; Chairman of the Episcopal Commission of Southeast Tennessee and North Georgia; and the only African-American to be elected President of the Tennessee Municipal League of Local Elected Officials; and

WHEREAS, the success of the State of Tennessee, the strength of our communities, and the overall vitality of our society depend, in great measure, on the dedication of people like Mr. Franklin who use their considerable talents and resources to serve others; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Franklin is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State," and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend John P. Franklin, Sr., for his meritorious service to the State of Tennessee and the people of Chattanooga, congratulate him upon being named one of Chattanooga's esteemed "Pioneer Leaders," and extend to him our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.